DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 229 630 CE 035 995

AUTHOR Morton, Ruth; Newman, Dianna L.
TITLE Barriers to Part Time Teaching: An Evaluation of Noncredit Continuing Education.
PUB DATE Oct 82
NOTE 17p.; Presented at the Evaluation Network Conference (Baltimore, MD, October 1982).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; *Adult Educators; *Continuing Education; Demography; *Job Satisfaction; Noncredit Courses; *Part Time Faculty; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Characteristics; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

Demographic profile data and data on barriers to teaching were collected and examined for part-time teachers in noncredit adult and continuing education programs in Nebraska. The data collection instrument was a mailed questionnaire administered statewide to a random sample of teachers, of whom 209 responded. Part-time teachers in noncredit continuing education in Nebraska's six community college areas were generally females under the age of 45. Over half were employed full-time aside from teaching. Most indicated satisfaction with the relatively low pay and their teaching. Subjects prepared for teaching in a variety of ways, including work experience, formal education, and personal experiences and interests. Major barriers to part-time teaching were time, low pay, not being paid for travel or preparation outside of class, wide range of student skills and abilities within the class, and finding and transporting supplies and equipment. Significant relationships were found between barriers and age, sex, satisfaction with teaching, and satisfaction with pay. These barriers implied certain changes for the practices of continuing education administrators. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED229630

Barriers to Part Time Teaching:

An Evaluation of Noncredit Continuing Education

Ruth Morton

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Dianna L. Newman

Oklahoma State University

Presented at Evaluation Network Conference

Baltimore, October, 1982

CE035995

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R Morton

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BARRIERS TO PART-TIME TEACHING: AN EVALUATION OF NONCREDIT CONTINUING EDUCATION

This paper presented at the 1982 Joint Meeting of Evaluation Network and Evaluation Research Society reports research that focused on demogrgaphic information on part-time teachers in noncredit continuing education and barriers to their teaching. The data collection instrument consisted of a mailed questionnaire administered statewide to a random sample of teachers. A final response rate of 71 percent (n=208) was obtained. In addition to demographic data, subjects indicated their satisfaction with teaching and pay, experiences that prepared them for teaching, as their participation as learners in continuing education. Subjects also completed a series of 26 Likert items on barriers to teaching part time in the noncredit area.

Significant differences were found on both age and sex of part-time instructors on barriers related to teaching. Most subjects indicated they were satisfied with their pay and teaching. Subjects prepared for teaching in a variety of ways, including work experience, formal education, and their personal experiences and interests. Major barriers included: (1) not being paid for travel or preparation outside of class, (2) wide range of student skills or knowledge, (3) finding and transporting supplies/materials, (4) time.

A discussion of implications for the practice of continuing education administrators is included.

INTRODUCTION

Professionals within the field of adult and continuing education can attest to their field's recent growth in the United States. This growth has occurred in two ways. First, the field has grown in status. As Parsons (1979) stated, "One of the hallmarks of adult and continuing education this decade (1970's) has been the movement of the education of adults from the periphery to the center of the educational scene..." Related to the growth in status has been the growth of the field of adult and continuing education in sheer numbers. From 1969 to 1975, adults participating in organized learning activities increased 30.8 percent, (Cross, 1979) which is more than double their increase in population (Parsons, 1979).

The role of the two-year, or junior and community colleges in providing a considerable portion of adult and continuing education in this country is unquestionable. When comparing total registrations for noncredit adult and continuing education activities in 1978 for institutions of higher education throughout the United States, the two-year colleges reported slightly over half (5.2 million) of the total registrations (Condition of Education, 1980, p. 246). Despite the growth of continuing education programs, few studies concerning the characteristics and motivations of teachers of these programs are available. The lack of research about teachers of adults poses a dangerous gap, for just as the number of participants and programs have increased, so has the number of teachers. Nevertheless, neither statewide nor national statistics are readily available on teachers in continuing education.

In noncredit continuing education programs, it is commonly believed that teachers are generally part time, often employed full or part time by other employers, notoriously underpaid, and frequently committed to other

obligations. If these commonly believed characteristics of teachers are true, it is indeed of interest that persons choose to participate in adult and continuing education programs as teachers. As learners are essential to continuing education programs, so are teachers. If "understanding the barriers to participation (of learners) has been a subject of special interest to researchers and policymakers" (Cross, 1981, p. 97), so should understanding the barriers to teachers be of interest.

The major purpose of this study was to collect and examine data about part-time teachers in noncredit adult and continuing education programs. This included demographic variables of teachers (e.g., age, sex, pay range, satisfaction with pay and teaching, employment status aside from part-time teaching, etc.) and conditions that limit or act as barriers to their teaching (e.g., low pay, locating child care, time).

The research objectives of the study were to: (1) obtain and examine demographic profile data about part-time teachers of adults in noncredit continuing education programs, (2) determine and examine conditions that teachers encounter that limit or act as barriers to their teaching, and (3) to compare selected demographic data with limitations to teaching to determine if patterns or relationships exist.

RELATED RESEARCH

Alan Knox, in a 1967 essay applying soical system theory to an analysis of adult education agencies, explained that the primary output for an agency is the "increased competence of the adult learners who participate on a part-time basis". The needed input (or resources) to produce that output included "learners, teachers, and administrators, and other resources such as money, materials, facilities, and support staff" (p. 2). To produce the desired output (increased competence of the learner) the various input

components must interact in an interdependent manner. Administrators, in the planning of continuing education programs, must consider the various resources or inputs, that are necessary to the process of producing the desired output. The importance of teachers to the system is indicated by Knox:

> ...in contrast with most educational institutions, the administrator does not have a 'faculty' in the usual sense of the word. The persons who teach or take primary educational responsibility for courses and other educational programs sponsored by the adult education agency typically spend most of their time teaching or working for some other unit of the parent organization or are recruited from the community. Typically, the proportion of their working time that is committed to the adult education agency is a minor part and as the considerations that led the teachers to teach in the adult education agency shift, the changing aggregate of teachers provide far less continuity than is typically associated with the academic community...(p. 9).

As Brown and Copeland (1979) indicated, "Since the public's expectations of continuing education have soared and accountability has become a household word, it is essential that continuing educators use effective practice and policies in supporting teachers of adults" (p. viii). Having access to demographic information on part-time teachers and limitations they perceive to teaching, can assist administrators in making decisions about teacher selection and support and provide understanding for overall management of continuing education programs.

Grymes (1976) and Quanty (1976) have provided descriptions of the "typical" part-time teacher: a white male, under 40, employed full time elsewhere, who has never held a full-time teacher position, has little contact with administration and is not required to participate in faculty "non-teaching" activities (e.g., meetings, advising, curriculum development). Abel (1977) found two exceptions to this model of the part-time teachers she surveyed. Fifty-four percent had no other job or only worked part time

elsewhere and fifty percent were female.

Cross (1981) provided the most integrated examination of barriers to participation by studying students. She classified barriers into three types. Situational barriers are those related to one's life at a particular time. Institutional barriers are those practices and procedures that exclude involvement. Dispositional barriers are those related to attitudes and self-perceptions. Cross found that adult learners ranked situational barriers as having the most impact, followed by institutional and then dispositional. She indicated, however, that the latter are probably underestimated because of subjects need for social desirability.

There are few sources that address the limitations or problems of part-time teachers, per se, and these rarely deal with noncredit courses in community colleges. Abel (1977) found that the most important concerns for part-time community college "for credit" instructors were: lack of job security and tenure; inadequate pay; lack of benefits and inability to move to full-time positions if desired. Other barriers (Grymes, 1976; Illinois Office of Education; Quanty, 1976; Lesht, undated) include: lack of communication with other faculty and administration; time spent in traveling; lack of office space and secretarial staff and little access to materials; course structure or curriculum guidelines.

Learning oriented problems were delineated by Draper and Smith (1973). These included the need to assess learning problems, slow learners, and differing levels of student achievement.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

A statewide random sample (n=294) of the current population of part-time

teachers in noncredit continuing education programs for each of six community colleges areas in Nebraska was utilized for administration of the Part-Time Teacher Questionnaire. Teachers were considered current if their teaching had ended within one month of receipt of the questionnaire. Furthermore, those who taught workshops or conferences were included in the sample. A usable return rate of seventy-one percent (n=209) was achieved.

Instrumentation

Part I on the questionnaire consisted of fifteen items which asked for demographic information on community college area, years in part-time teaching, number and category of classes taught, pay per class, satisfaction with pay and teaching, employment status aside from part-time teaching, formal educational attainment, experiences that prepared them for teaching, participation as a learner, age, and sex.

Part II of the questionnaire consisted of twenty-six Likert type items stating conditions that part-time teachers in noncredit continuing education programs sometimes encounter. Respondents were directed to indicate the extent that each condition limits them or is a barrier to their teaching. A four-point Likert scale was used, with 0 to indicate that the condition does not apply, 1 - not limiting, 2 - somewhat limiting, and 3 - quite limiting. After completing the 26 items, subjects were asked to indicate their three current most limiting conditions and the three most limiting conditions for when they started teaching. For analysis purposes, the 26 items were summed into three groups that were labeled as situational barriers, (n=4); institutional barriers, (n=15); and dispositional barriers, (n=7). Reliability, using coefficient alpha, for each group was: situational - .49; instiutional - .79; dispositional - .69. The total reliability for the 26 items was .83.

RESULTS

Descriptions of Respondents

Following is a description of the respondents who participated in the survey. This information gives an overall picture of part-time instructors in noncredit continuing education programs sponsored by the community colleges in Nebraska.

Age and Sex. The largest category of respondents were between 25 and 34 years of age (thirty-seven percent). In fact, seventy-one percent of the respondents are 44 or fewer years old. The majority of the respondents were female (66%).

Work Status. Forty-six percent of the respondents indicated that aside from teaching part time at their community college they also worked full time at another job. An additional nine percent indicated dual roles of homemaker and full-time worker. Only 10.6% indicated the status of full-time homemaker without other full- or part-time employment. Forty-one percent of the respondents indicated that they teach either full or part time at a different program or institution. Of the respondents who are teaching elsewhere, thirty-five percent are teaching at a secondary school and thirty-seven percent in "other" types of educational settings.

Years Involved in Part-time Teaching. Thirty-five percent of the respondents indicated that they have taught part-time for a year or less at their present institution; 17.8 percent have taught for two years and 14.4 percent have taught for three years. Seventy-six percent indicated that they had not taught at any other noncredit continuing education program. Of the respondents who had indicated that they had taught at another program, fifty percent had taught only one year.

Educational Background. Slightly over 60 percent of the respondents had

an Associate degree or higher educational background. Fifteen percent of the respondents indicated that they had no more than a high school diploma, while 23.6 percent had some college but did not have an associate degree.

Teaching Load. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents showed they taught only one noncredit class, while 27 percent taught two classes. Forty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they taught hobby or recreational classes followed by vocational (13.7%), home and family (13.3%), personal development (12.8%), and general education (10.2%). Public affairs, agriculture, and religion were taught by approximately one percent each. Most instructors taught only one class except in the agriculture and religion areas. In these areas, particpants taught approximatley four classes each.

Pay Scale. Respondents were asked to indicate, within categories, what amounts they were paid per contact hour. The majority of the respondents (79.8%) indicated that they received $6 to $10 per contact hour. When asked to indicate their satisfaction with their pay on a Likert type scale (0 - very satisfied, 1 - satisfied, 2 - not satisfied), 15.9% indicated they were not satisfied. Using a similar scale (0 - very satisfied, 1 - satisfied, 2 - not satisfied), respondents were also asked to indicate their general level of satisfaction with teaching part time in a noncredit program. Fifty-three percent indicated that they were very satisfied, 45.7% indicated that they were satisifed, and .5 percent indicated no satisfaction. A Chi-square contingency analysis was used to determine if a relationship existed between satisfaction with pay and satisfaction with teaching. A significant relationship was found (Chi-square = 228.1, 4 d.f., $p < .05$). The more satisfied respondents were with teaching, the more satisfied they were with pay. A Chi-square analysis was also done on satisfaction with teaching by age to determine if a relationship existed. No significant

difference was found between age and teacher satisfaction level (Chi-square = 15.7, 10 d.f., $p > .05$).

Preparation for Teaching. Subjects were asked to indicate on a checklist what experiences prepared them for teaching their noncredit courses. The categroies that received the highest number of selections were personal study (57.5%), work experience (66.5%), personal interest (64.9%), and formal education (52.4%). Subjects also indicated that not only were they active in teaching, but they were active in learning as a means of continuing their own education. Seventy percent indicated that they had participated as a learner in at least one continuing education activity in the last calendar year. Over fifty percent indicated that they had participated in two or more activities.

Barriers to Teaching Part-time in Noncredit Programs. Twenty-six items related to conditions that can be limitations or barriers to part-time teachers were listed in the questionnaire. Subjects responded to each item on a four point Likert scale: 0 - not applicable, 1 - not limiting, 2 - somewhat limiting, 3 - quite limiting. Summed scores were utilized to obtain three groups of barriers which were used as dependent variables: situational barriers, institutional barriers, and dispositional barriers.

The results will be examined by the three dependent variables.

Situational Barriers. Situational barriers are those that arise from the individual's situation in life at a given time. An example is "locating child care". A one factor analysis of variance for situational barriers was performed by the independent variable of age, which was categorized into five groups. A significant difference between the groups was found ($F=4.09$, $p < .05$). More limitations were found for the younger age groups ($\bar{X}=3.26$ to 4.28) than for older (55 and above) participants ($\bar{X}=2.45$). No significant difference was found between sex of particpants on presence of situational

barriers.

No difference was found between presence of sitational barriers and subject satsifaction with pay ($F=2.75$, $p > .05$). A signficant difference was found, however, with satisfaction with teaching ($F=4.96$, $p < .05$). The more satisfied subjects were with teaching, the fewer situational barriers they indicated. No significant differences were found on extent of limitations wher examined by subjects' number of years teaching or position as a teacher elsewhere.

Institutional Barriers. Institutional barriers arise from the practices, procedures, and policies of the institution sponsoring the program, such as the item "low pay for teaching". When institutional barriers were analyzed by age, no significant difference was found ($F=.66$, $p > .05$). A difference was found on the independent variable of sex ($F=4.20$, $p < .05$). Female subjects indicated fewer limitations related to the institution ($\bar{X}=14.17$) than did male subjects ($\bar{X}=17.06$). A significant difference was also found on limitations due to the institution on satisfaction with pay ($F=15.89$, $p < .05$). Those subjects very satisfied with their pay found fewer institutional barriers ($\bar{X}=12.15$) than did those who were not satisfied ($\bar{X}=19.31$). No significant differences were found on the dependent variable, institutional barriers, for satsifaction with teaching ($F=2.83$, $p > .05$), or position as a teacher elsewhere ($F=.46$, $p > .05$).

Dispositional Barriers. Dispositional barriers arise from the attitudes, self-perception, or feelings of the teacher, such as the item "teaching a topic in which I'm insecure." One way analysis of variance was also used to look for subject differences on barriers related to disposition. A significant difference was found on the independent variable age ($F=3.67$, $p < .05$). Once again, younger particpants indicated more limitations ($\bar{X}=5.98$ to 7.40) than

did older (55 or above) subjects ($\bar{X}$=4.10). A significant difference was also found on the independent variable sex ($F=3.92$, $p<.05$). Female subjects indicated that fewer of the dispositional items were barriers. Significant differences were not found by satisfaction with pay ($F=1.25$, $p>.05$), years of teaching experience ($F=0.85$, $p>.05$), or position as a teacher elsewhere ($F=0.13$, $p>.05$).

Item Analysis of Barriers. A secondary analysis of limitations or barriers looked at the frequency of each item when subjects indicated the three most limiting conditions to their teaching, now and when they started. Each items' responses were summed over all subjects, cumulating in a summed score. These scores were treated as dependent variables to be examined for differences on the independent variable "total number of years of part-time teaching". This variable was categorized into three groups: 1 or less years experience, 2 - 4 years, and 5 or more. Breakdowns were obtained for barriers both now and when respondents started part-time teaching.

Under current limitations "Wide range of student skills/knowledge" was one of the most limiting conditions for experienced groups but not for the new instructors. Time was a limiting condition for the 0 - 1 and 2 - 4 groups but not the 5 or more years experience group. The 0 - 1 and 5 or more groups indicated that not being paid for travel or preparation and being responsible for finding transporting supplies as most limiting conditions whereas the 2 - 4 group did not.

All groups found time a limiting condition for when they started teaching. Only groups with more experience indicated low pay as a limiting condition both "then and now". Other most limiting conditions "then" found in two of the three groups were responsibility for finding, transporting supplies in the 0 - 1 and 5 or more groups, wide range of student skills in the 0 - 1

and 2 - 4 groups, not paid for travel or preparation in the 0 - 1 and 5 or more groups. Having no prior teaching experience was a most limiting condition "then" only for the 2 - 4 group.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary of Findings

Part-time teachers in noncredit continuing education in Nebraska's six community college areas are generally female and under the age of 45. Over half are employed full time aside from their part-time teaching. Most teach one class, and many are relatively inexperienced in teaching part time. Pay is relatively low, yet most teachers indicate satisfaction with it.. Slightly over sixty percent had an Associate Degree or higher, but they indicated a variety of experiences that prepared them for teaching part time. Most further their education by participating as a learner in continuing education activities.

Important barriers to part-time teachers in noncredit continuing education are:

(1) time spent in teaching or preparing to teach,

(2) low pay for teaching,

(3) not being paid for travel or preparation outside of class,

(4) wide range of student skills/abilities within the class,

(5) being responsible for transporting supplies and equipment.

Significant relationships were found between (1) age, sex, satisfaction with teaching, and satisfaction with pay, and (2) barriers.

Implications for Theory and Practice

Part-time teachers are clearly busy people with commitments and obligations to work and family. The fact of a seventy-eight percent return rate might indicate the make-up of the population as being dedicated and interest-

ed enough to respond to queries from a researcher unknown to them. Because of the relatively low pay scale and teacher satisfaction with it, it appears that individuals are not teaching strictly for the income. Rather, perhaps they accept and are satisfied with low pay because their expectations are to receive more intangible rewards from teaching. However, low pay and not being paid for travel or preparation are also perceived as barriers. These seemingly contradictory notions indicate further investigation is necessary, especially as they pertain to the finding of a significant relationship between satisfaction with pay and institutional barriers (which include the items of low pay and not being paid for travel or preparation).

The important barriers that were found in the study imply certain changes for the adult education administrator. Institutional policies that preclude paying instructors for travel or instruction should be reconsidered. Pay scales should be reviewed, and if possible, revised. Support services for part-time teachers should be enhanced, and more importantly, communicated to the teachers. In-service training for teachers could help them learn ways to more effectively deal with the wide range of student abilities that they face in their classes. Time management seminars might help them become better managers of their time, and therefore, lower that perceived barrier.

The causes for the relationship between barriers and sex and age are not clear, but administrators need to be cognizant of the fact that differences do exist. Elimination of as many barriers as possible will indicate to teachers that they are a vital resource in the continuing education program. It should also create a more stable core of part-time teachers upon whom the administrator can depend. For those barriers that cannot be reduced or eliminated, information or referrals can help teachers eliminate those barriers themselves.

This research was a start in attempting to learn more about an essential component in the field of adult and continuing education. Programs cannot exist without part-time teachers. Continued research attention should be directed toward learning more about the characteristics, motivations of, and barriers to part-time teachers.

REFERENCES

Abel, E. K. Invisible and indispensible: Part-time teachers in California community colleges. Community Junior College Research Quarterly, 1977, 2 (1) 77-91.

Brown, M. A. & Copeland, H. B. (Eds.) Attracting able instructors of adults. New directions for continuing education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979.

Carp, A., Peterson, R. and Roelfs, P. Adult learning interests and experience. In K. P. Cross, J. R. Valley and Associates (Eds.), Planning non-traditional programs. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974.

The condition of education. Washington, D. C.: National Center for Educational Statistics, 1980.

Cross, K. P. Adult learners: Characteristics, needs, and interests. In R. E. Peterson and Associates, Lifelong learning in America: An overview of current practices. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979.

Cross, K. P. Adults as learners. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.

Draper, J. A., and Smith, E. A. Part-time teachers of adults. Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 1973, 19, 224-231.

Grymes, R. J. A survey and analysis of part-time instructors at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College Virginia. J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Richmond, VA, 1947. (ERIC ED 125 687)

Illinois Office of Education. In-service education programs for community college part-time faculty. Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education, undated.

Knox, A. B. Social system analysis of the adult education agency. Unpublished manuscript, 1967.

Lesht, F. Instructor motivation: a summary report. Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education, Illinois State Board of Education, undated.

Parsons, J. New directions for attracting able teachers of adults. New direccions for continuing education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979.